(a) whether Government have taken steps to curb insurgency/militancy in North-Eastern States, more particularly in Assam where recently a State Minister was killed and an attempt was made on another Minister, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that militancy is on the increase day by day in North-Eastern Region, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to curb the insurgency which has increased manifold due to enhanced activities of ISI in NE Region after the Kargil operation ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L. K. ADVANI) : (a) to (c) Though militant activities in Manipur and Tripura have shown an increase in recent past, the overall situation in Assam and Nagaland has shown improvement, Other North-Eastern States are by and large peaceful.

The strategy adopted by the Government to improve the situation in the North-East includes a willingness to meet and discuss legitimate grievances; resolve that violence would not be tolerated; friendly relations with neighbouring countries; accelerated infrastructural development; stress on employment; good governance and decentralization.

The Central Government has taken a number of measures to combat militancy in the North-East. These include, *inter alia,* deployment of Central Para Military Forces and Army; improved coordination and sharing of intelligence between the Security Forces; modernisation/upgradation of the State Police Forces; declaration of major insurgent groups as unlawful associations; notification of most seriously affected areas as "disturbed areas" and sanction of Special Central assistance to the State Governments.

Suspension of operation against the Bodo Liberation Tiger, growing public reaction against militancy and surrender of a large number of militants in Assam are significant developments.

Violence Against Women

*537. SHRI BHAGAT RAM MANHAR :
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that violence against women have increased in the country;

(b) the details of cases of rape, molestation and other crimes reported against women during the last two years, State-wise; and

(c) what steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken to curb such violence against women?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L. K. ADVANI) : (a) Available information indicates that the incidents of crime against women in 1998 registered an increase of over 8% over the previous year, i.e. 1997.

(b) The information received from the National Crime Records Bureau in this regard is given in Annexure [*See* Appendix 189, Annexure No. 98].

(c) 'Public Order' and 'Police' are State subjects as per the Constitution of India. As such, registration, investigation, detection and prevention of crime is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments. However, the Central Government has been advising the State Governments, from time to time, to give more focussed attention to improving the administration of criminal justice system so as to ensure prevention of atrocities against women and other vulnerable sections of the society. The Government of India has also been extending financial assistance to the State Governments for improving their policing infrastructure. The Central Government proposes to amend section 376 of the Indian Penal Code so as to provide death as one of the punishments for the offence of rape.

Improvements in the Police Act

†*538. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have constituted any Committee or Commission to suggest improvements in the Police Act;

(b) whether Government are taking any immediate action to enforce stringent punishment against the police personnel involved in trapping innocent citizens in fake cases and violating human rights;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.